

# West Copeland Partnership Plan – June 2011

St Bees Head with sculpture by artist Jac Smith  
Map showing West Copeland Area with district ward boundaries  
Greasy Pole (in use!) by Jeremy Deller and Alan Kane



## Introduction to the Locality

The West Copeland locality is characterised by its dramatic location between the western fells of Ennerdale and the heritage coast, with Egremont, the historic regional capital with its ruined Norman castle on the banks of the River Ehen, providing vital services for surrounding communities and visitors, including doctors surgeries, insurance and estate agents, banks, post office, swimming pool, local food, tourism advice and arts and crafts. The villages of Moor Row, Bigrigg, Thornhill, Haile, Wilton, Beckermont and St Bees form a circle around Egremont at the centre of the locality and these offer a full range of housing types in strong communities with a number of fine churches, a beautiful coastline and low fells on the fringes of the lake district. Egremont also serves the valleys of Wasdale and Eskdale.

Sellafield is situated predominantly within the West Copeland locality, with the area providing around 1,000 of the workforce on site (this representing about 50% of the entire workforce of the locality.)

Within the locality, two adjacent housing areas of Orgill and Smithfield and South Bigrigg show signs of deprivation and are in placed within the lowest 15% of areas in Cumbria in regard of Employment, Income, Skills and Health. These areas demand specific attention. Locality working offers the opportunity to address the causes of failure in these areas and for the community to influence directly the way that services affecting these issues are delivered, holding to account the agencies and working with them to devise local solutions to raising attainment. Projects already within the regeneration action plan work target these areas.

So whilst areas within the town of Egremont present the greater challenges; raising the quality of services and environment throughout the locality is key to lifting the whole area in terms of quality of life and economic performance. The Market Town Initiative in Egremont, which finished in 2009, has led to a Regeneration Partnership which continues to implement projects, particularly around cultural development and there may be opportunities for the locality partnership to work with the Regeneration Partnership to fundraise and implement projects in areas outside of Egremont in due course.

The Locality Partnership provides a forum in which parish, town, district and county council members can work together to understand the needs and wishes of their communities and to influence the delivery of services to meet these. This plan is an expression of the priorities for this locality and the evidence for this. In particular these are the priorities that can best be taken forward by working together or which affect the area as a whole, or which demand a collective response and where working in this way is more likely to achieve the end of better designed and delivered services, projects or events. The Partnership is also a forum for sharing best practice.

Copeland Borough Council and Cumbria County Council have signed up to work with locality partnerships in Copeland and will look to the plans to guide the development of work in these areas.

The West Copeland locality has the potential to provide a high quality of life for all its residents, with the Lake District to the east, the heritage coast to the west and the historic

town of Egremont, and has agreed to work together towards developing its plan in particular around the following priorities:

- Young people – what to do leaflet as start point
- Job prospects and issues to health
- Environmental Projects – Lengthsman
- Rural Broadband
- Community Events/ Tourism calendar

Additional pictures to be inserted: St Bees Priory, Egremont Castle, Dent from Bigrigg path, Moor Row hiker, Haile Church, etc.

## 1. Background to this plan

In October 2010, an issues paper was produced and discussed. This has now been developed following on going community led planning in the parishes and the town. The Localities Team will continue to assist as required with planning at local level.

Data from the Place Survey, the Index of Multiple Deprivation, the Vulnerable Localities Index and the new interactive Cumbria's Story 'Atlas' have been used to provide the parishes with additional statistical evidence on the issues in their communities.

This plan sets out the priority issues arising from the town and parishes and looks to find the common ground from which the Area Partnership can take its direction for the coming year. It will not repeat the detail of the data collected in each of the Parish/ Community Plans, but refers to the evidence of need and priority.

## 2. Priority Issues

### 2.1. Children and Young People and Educational Attainment

Lack of provision of activities for teenagers is a common concern amongst respondents to the Place Survey throughout the locality and Borough-wide. Youth services, whether by professional providers such as Youthworks and Young Cumbria or by volunteers is patchy across the area. In St Bees, it is thought that some professional input would enable the community to sustain improved youth provision.

Developing and engaging with a youth council for West Copeland is seen as a way to understand better the needs and aspirations of young people.

The Place Survey throughout the Copeland has highlighted problems with low educational attainment and low aspirations.

#### Children & Young People

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Activities for Teenagers – patchy youth provision across locality	It is recognised that there is inevitably limited provision within rural areas and that some travelling will often be required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with providers and voluntary sector to map provision and investigate ways to fill gaps</li> <li>• Engage with providers and with young people to understand need</li> <li>• Understand pattern of take up across locality and relation to Whitehaven</li> </ul>	Connexions, YouthWorks, Young Cumbria, Copeland Youth Engagement Team

Opportunities	Encourage the participation of all and especially of young people in the development of youth services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Youth Council with CBC Youth Engagement Officer</li> <li>• Look at opportunities to work on local project at Clints, etc.</li> </ul>	CBC Youth Engagement team
Facilities for young children	Highlighted in the Place Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the improvement of the play area at Moor Row</li> <li>• Investigate potential improvements at St Bees</li> </ul>	CBC LW team / Copeland Community Fund

### Education – Aspirations

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Education	How can partnership working make improvements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop links between community and West Lakes Academy</li> </ul>	WLA, Parish and Town Councils
Low aspirations	Issue that NEET numbers low, but issue still apparent, plus changing policy may increase local NEET numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate ways to work with STEPS project being trialled in Cleator Moor</li> <li>• Encourage participation in creative work at Florence</li> </ul>	CBC Locality Team, Egremont Regeneration

## 2.2. Planning

The ability of communities to influence the Local Development Framework and development control has been an issue in some of the wards, and that this might be affected in the future by national policy development under the Big Society.

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Link community and locality plans with the Local Development Framework	This has the potential to increase the influence of local communities in the development of their areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to increase local influence within the Local Development Framework</li> <li>• Consider new powers being delegated to communities in Localism Bill</li> </ul>	CBC Development Strategy and Development Control

### 2.3. Environment (road and pavement repairs / clean streets)

Clean streets and maintaining the environment was an issue in all of the parishes. Dog fouling remains a concern for a lot of residents.

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Dog fouling highlighted as an issue in all areas		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More around education and information</li> </ul>	CBC
Maintenance of parks and open spaces – work with CBC in light of spending cuts		Support work of and share learning of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends of Egremont Castle</li> <li>• Beach Advisory Group / Coastal awards</li> <li>• Volunteer/Parish/Town led maintenance</li> <li>• Consider Parish Lengthsman scheme as operating in North East Copeland and currently starting up in Howgate/ Distington</li> </ul>	CBC LW team
Diverse flooding issues in parts of locality	In Beckermat and St Bees the issue is the run off from fields, in Egremont the River Ehen is prone to flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although solutions are local, sharing learning across the locality particularly around minimising the physical and financial effects of flooding can be beneficial</li> </ul>	Egremont Flood Action group

### 2.4. Traffic and Transport

Further development of issues is required for inclusion in the Local Transport Plan review. Key issues raised so far include:

- 2.4.1. Sellafield commuter traffic
- 2.4.2. Speeding traffic through villages (Haile, Wilton, St Bees, Beckermat)
- 2.4.3. Dangerous crossing at Moor Row over A595 to access public transport – Working being down through LTP3 junction improvement
- 2.4.4. Access to public transport and lack of provision in rural villages
- 2.4.5. Roads maintenance

As with other priorities, certain issues have successfully in the past and will continue to be dealt with at parish level, but are brought together in this action plan, where synergies and opportunities for joint working will arise.

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Speeding traffic – particularly associated with shift times at Sellafield Site although issues also in residential areas, such as at Thornhill	<p>The West Copeland Locality is particularly affected by increases in activity at Sellafield, including any new building work.</p> <p>In St Bees a traffic committee has been formed and has led to a new safety scheme.</p> <p>The Cold Fell Action Group has led to new measures to reduce speeds, benefiting the south east of the locality.</p> <p>Measures have also been considered in Beckermat, but so far not received widespread backing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share learning across localities and jointly provide comments on traffic and transport issues via the Transport Plan</li> <li>• Support and engage with Sellafield in production of transport plans</li> </ul>	<p>Localities together</p> <p>LW team to investigate latest position on Sellafield Green Plan</p>
Public Transport – various concerns about infrequency of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Later in day</li> <li>• To Cinema at Dunmail Park</li> <li>• To Beckermat Village</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider alternative means of providing for the transport needs</li> <li>• Establish local access point and volunteer base for CCC managed voluntary car scheme</li> </ul>	<p>CCC</p> <p>W Copeland Partnership</p>
Cycleways		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve cycle connections around locality including valley route from Whitehaven to St Bees in connection with colourful coast</li> <li>• Continue to promote cycling via leaflets</li> </ul>	<p>LW team to follow up with W’haven partnership</p> <p>EARP / Lowes Court</p>
Larger infrastructure concerns, including suitable roads into / out of area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support calls for road / rail improvements in connection with development</li> </ul>	<p>Liaise with CRUG and engage with MRWS process</p>

## 2.5. Job prospects

The Place Survey data has shown job prospects to be a priority in each of the wards within the West Copeland area, reflecting the dominance of Sellafield and uncertainty around the future of nuclear developments. This is understood to be anxiety for their own job prospects, but also that respondents might be reflecting that a lack of diversity in the jobs market is leading to young people leaving the area. There is a well-documented 'out-migration' of young people with this demographic under-represented in West Copeland more than elsewhere. The District wards of Egremont South, Beckermest and St Bees all show a markedly low percentage of residents in the 15 – 29 age range and all the wards in the locality are below the national average in this range. In the age ranges above and below, the figures broadly reflect national trends again, although in Beckermest and Thornhill the 0-14 population is falling proportionately faster than the Copeland average, whereas in St Bees, it has increased marginally.

Tourism issues are that there is limited quality accommodation on offer and low numbers of day visitors. Expand on St Bees and Coast to Coast as issue.

Also add in something on poverty, financial inclusion – Home Group smart meter scheme could be introduced in Egremont?

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Tourist Information		Work in partnership across locality to promote tourism opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Bees Priory, link to Egremont Castle and other medieval heritage</li> <li>• Coast and Low Fells</li> <li>• Cycleway links – St Bees to Whitehaven</li> <li>• Walking, cycling routes</li> <li>• Ehen Valley with NE Copeland</li> </ul>	Lowes Court / Beach Advisory Group / West Lakes Tourism Partnership / EARP / RNEC
Job Opportunities	Tourism has for some time been recognised as having potential for growth and to diversify the economy. The Florence Mine arts project will help artists and creative people based in the area to be part of the national arts and creative industries, with high profile artists in residence through links with Grizedale Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the development of proposed Bridge End Industrial Estate extension</li> <li>• Use Florence Mine centre as a hub for development and promotion of creative industries Coordinate and promote events across area</li> </ul>	CBC Locality Team / Economic Development Team / EARP Mgr at Florence Mine  CBC – Econ Devt

	and Tate and training in film and media work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage employers to engage with apprenticeship scheme</li> </ul>	
Egremont as a service centre – Schools, Doctors, Retail etc.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand relation to Whitehaven and people's use of both across area</li> <li>Investigate opportunities to restart advice and grants schemes to encourage new businesses and entrepreneurs (eg InBiz scheme under Market Town Initiative)</li> </ul>	CBC LW and Econ Devt Teams

## 2.6. Local Services

The Place Survey showed a reasonable satisfaction with the delivery of services, but realism about the imminent budget cuts and a desire to influence the way services are delivered. This did not focus on particular services.

A key issue for Egremont and the rural villages will be to retain services in the face of public sector cuts. In addition there is limited broadband access across the locality.

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Library provision – Egremont, St Bees, Thornhill		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage, Promotion, usage, sustainability.</li> </ul>	CCC
Access to services / customer services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage development of one stop shop / local link centre for Egremont</li> <li>Encourage public service surgeries (CBC, Police, CCC) at convenient locations such as the De Lucy Centre</li> <li>Look at rural centres and recreation of schemes, such as the White Mare in Beckermest</li> </ul>	CBC/CCC/Police
Rural Broadband		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To pursue avenues through BT and CCC for improved Broadband infrastructure</li> </ul>	LW Team

## 2.7. Level of crime

In common with Copeland in general, the level of Crime is low, but perceptions of crime level are at odds with these statistics and fear of crime is still an issue.

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Fear of Crime / unreported crime		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaison with police to ascertain if unknown issues</li> <li>Link to rural village Neighbourhood Watch schemes</li> </ul>	

## 2.8. Health

Access to health services arises as an issue for some communities within the locality, particularly where public transport is less available and where the population is older.

Issue	Comments	Partnership Action	Lead partners
Access to and provision of medical services in villages		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish link with lead GP for West Copeland area (Dr Jakobson, Beech House)</li> </ul>	LW team
Allotments, local produce and growing projects		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support extension of Fairtrade Town Campaign (and Farmer's/Craft Market) area to take in St Bees and Beckermat</li> <li>Raise awareness of Community Orchard project in Egremont</li> </ul>	
First Responders	Successful schemes in St Bees and Beckermat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share learning across locality to spread to areas not covered</li> </ul>	
Alcohol misuse, particularly amongst young people	Data shows Copeland to have highest alcohol related hospital admissions nationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Press for continuation of alcohol outreach post which is due to end at the end of March via Localities Together</li> </ul>	

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